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SUBJECT: UN SECURITY COUNCIL CONSULTATIONS ON SYG'S  
QUARTERLY REPORT ON UNSCR 1701 - LEBANON

REF: STATE 69808

11. (SBU) Summary: In July 8 Security Council consultations on the UNSCR 1701 report, UN Special Coordinator for Lebanon Williams told the Council that the successful Lebanese parliamentary elections and the calm during the reporting period offers a real opportunity for full implementation of UNSCR 1701 and the establishment of a permanent cease-fire between Lebanon and Israel. He highlighted the high degree of competence exhibited by the Lebanese Armed Forces (LAF) during the period, but noted that Hizballah continued to maintain its own arms and the lack of progress on the disarmament of armed groups. Both Williams and the DPKO representative noted the Israeli hand-over of cluster munitions strike data was useful. Council members also lauded Lebanon's successful parliamentary elections and UNIFIL's work maintaining calm, but many members called for greater progress on enforcement of the arms embargo, border control, and disarmament of armed groups. Many Council members called for the end of Israel's overflights of Lebanon with some linking those flights to the lack of border control. Council members almost unanimously called for Israel's withdrawal from northern Ghajar. A number of Council members expressed concern about the allegations of the Israeli spy ring in Lebanon. End summary.

UNSCOL briefing  
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12. (SBU) UN Special Coordinator for Lebanon Michael Williams briefed the Council on July 8 during its consultations on the Secretary-General's tenth report on the implementation of UNSCR 1701. He emphasized the calm in Lebanon during the reporting period, especially during the Lebanese parliamentary elections, and called for "renewed vigor" to fully implement UNSCR 1701 and establish a permanent cease-fire between Lebanon and Israel. He commented that political tensions had decreased markedly in Lebanon since the elections but there is no date certain by when the new government will be formed and present its policy platform, though he expects it to commit fully to UNSCR 1701. He underlined that Hizballah continues to maintain its arms, separate from the state, and has publicly spoken of its support, including military assistance to Palestinian militants. He reiterated the Secretary-General's call for the disarmament of such groups through a Lebanese-led political process. He noted that the hardship in the Palestinian refugee camps aids in the recruitment of extremist groups and called on the next government to continue the work of the Lebanese-Palestinian Dialogue Committee established by the Siniora government.

13. (SBU) Williams emphasized several times during consultations the high degree of competence demonstrated by the Lebanese Armed Forces (LAF) and security forces during the June elections. He called on the international community to support the security sector since it will play a key role in the disarmament of militias, and recognized U.S. and

Emirati assistance to the LAF. He noted the progress made on plans to extend the Common Border Force to the eastern border and said that Prime Minister Siniora would seek to ensure that Lebanese control of the land border would be a priority of his successor.

¶4. (SBU) Williams referred to the Israeli hand-over on May 12 of cluster munitions technical strike data in fulfillment of a long-standing UN request. He called for Israel to end its overflights of Lebanese airspace and to withdraw from northern Ghajar, noting that technical discussions with the Israeli government had not progressed, through UNIFIL remains ready to play its role to facilitate a withdrawal. He said that neither Israel nor Syria have responded to the technical definition put forward by the Secretary-General on the Sheba'a Farms. He referred to the "alleged" Israeli spy network in Lebanon and the arrest by the Lebanese authorities of a significant number of individuals who have been charged with espionage. He said that if espionage is proven, it could undermine the fragile cease-fire.

¶5. (SBU) On the regional environment, he noted the establishment of full diplomatic relations between Lebanon and Syria with the completion of the exchange of ambassadors before the Lebanese elections. At the end of his remarks, he noted the fears that have arisen in Lebanon with Prime Minister Netanyahu's insistence on Israel's nature as a Jewish state, given the question of Palestinian refugees in Lebanon.

DPKO briefing

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¶6. (SBU) Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) Assistant Secretary-General Edmond Mulet briefed on the operational aspects of UNIFIL's implementation of UNSCR 1701, saying the area of operations (AOR) had remained generally quiet and there were no incidents to report since the release of the Secretary-General's report. He said that the Lebanese government had confirmed its plans to reinforce the LAF in the AOR, now that the elections are over. He described the cluster munitions technical strike data handed over by the IDF as "useful" and said that UNIFIL and the LAF are trying to identify other strike locations for de-mining. He confirmed that infantry companies from Nepal and Malaysia would be deploying in the fall with UNIFIL, and that UNIFIL was looking to replace the departing Polish logistics company with a multi-role logistics company in October. He said additional assets for the Maritime Task Force are gravely needed.

Council members on borders,  
arms, and spies  
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¶7. (SBU) Security Council members almost uniformly lauded the successful holding of Lebanese parliamentary elections and called for the new government to implement UNSCR 1701. (Note: Ambassador Wolff delivered U.S. points contained in refTel. End note.) Mexico called for the delineation of the northern and eastern borders. Libya said that the issue of the border between Lebanon and Syria is a matter for the two countries but did admit that the lack of control of part of the border is a problem. Russia said that the two states should "sort out" their common border issues but, like Libya, underlined that border control is the business of those two states alone.

¶8. (SBU) France called for Lebanon to have a monopoly over all of its territory and emphasized the need for enforcement of the arms embargo and the disarmament of all armed groups. Austria, Croatia, Japan, and Costa Rica all urged respect for the arms embargo, called for the disarmament of Hizballah, and stressed the need for better border management and

progress on border delineation. The UK and Austria pledged to support the Common Border Force. Libya said that the disarmament of armed groups in Lebanon is a domestic matter, and the Council should instead focus on violations of Lebanese airspace and territorial waters by Israel; Israel's recruitment of spies in Lebanon; and Israel's continued hostile declarations against Lebanon.

¶9. (SBU) Many Council members called for the end of Israeli overflights that violate Lebanese sovereignty and UNSCR 1701. Several, including Mexico and Japan linked those overflights to the non-enforcement of the arms embargo and the re-arming of Hizballah as justification for the overflights and urged a halt to the trafficking in weapons. Council members almost unanimously called for Israel's withdrawal from northern Ghajar. Many, including Russia, also called for a settlement of the Sheba'a Farms issue.

¶10. (SBU) France said that allegations of an Israeli spy network in Lebanon are a negative sign. Mexico voiced concern about the allegations and called for the rule of law to be applied. Japan noted that if the allegations are proven true, they would be a violation of UNSCR 1701. Vietnam voiced concern about the spying network and that Israel had assisted some of the accused in fleeing to Israel across the Blue Line, including an LAF colonel recently. Libya took issue with how much of the report the Secretary-General had focused on arms trafficking in comparison with the spying network, when the Lebanese government had provided substantial information to the UN on the subject and the Israeli authorities had not denied the matter. The Libyan Charge said, "The spies clearly intended to destabilize Lebanon and maybe undertake terrorist attacks."

Israeli hand-over of  
technical strike data  
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¶11. (SBU) Austria, China, Croatia, France, Uganda, and the UK welcomed the Israeli hand-over of the cluster munitions technical strike data. Mexico and Japan said it was an important step forward to promoting trust between the parties. Libya said the information was not complete. Russia called on Israel to hand over all maps, including those for mines it left behind in Lebanon. While the Vietnamese Deputy Perm Rep noted Israel's hand-over of the technical strike data, he commented on the continuing civilian deaths from unexploded ordinance.

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Regional issues  
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¶12. (SBU) Most Council members welcomed the completion of the exchange of ambassadors between Lebanon and Syria. Mexico noted the U.S. decision to appoint an ambassador to Syria. Austria called for the new Lebanese government to improve the socioeconomic conditions for Palestinian refugees and called on Gulf donors to meet their pledges for the reconstruction of the Nahr el-Bared Palestinian refugee camp. Costa Rica urged the promotion of tolerance in the Palestinian refugee camps so they do not become a breeding ground for extremists. Costa Rica also voiced concern about Hizballah's activities towards the Gaza Strip and said they must be addressed as Lebanon should not have to suffer the consequences.

UNIFIL  
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¶13. (SBU) Almost all Council members congratulated UNIFIL on its work maintaining the cessation of hostilities. The French Perm Rep referred to France's significant troop contributions to UNIFIL and specifically lauded the LAF's improved effectiveness in action, which he noted was

previously lacking. Mexico and the UK highlighted the importance of the tripartite meetings to the maintenance of calm along the Blue Line. The UK reiterated the Secretary-General's language from the report that UNIFIL cannot be sustained indefinitely and called for DPKO to conduct a strategic review of UNIFIL to see if any reconfigurations will achieve greater effectiveness. Mexico called for an investigation to determine which groups were responsible for the rocket attacks in January and February. A/SYG Mulet noted, in response to an Austrian question, that no progress had been made on establishing the UNIFIL office in Tel Aviv since, despite Israel's February 2007 agreement, the IDF now insists such an office is not needed.

Final UNSCOL thoughts  
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¶14. (SBU) At the end of consultations, Williams said it is important to "take stock" of what has been achieved and what has been "strikingly unachieved" in the three years since UNSCR 1701 was approved. He highlighted that, in contrast to previous periods, no Israeli soldiers or civilians have been killed by cross-border action since the conflict ended, nor have any Lebanese soldiers or civilians, except by landmines.

He responded to Libyan and Russian criticism of the technical strike data, saying that the new Israeli government had provided it within six weeks of formation and that it is significant data which will enable lives to be saved. He also lauded the very regular holding of the trilateral meetings without interruption.

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